

Fiery Darts of the Enemy



Here is a case study of the attacks of the enemy. The backdrop of this story is King Hezekiah, king of Judah, was being blockaded by King Sennacherib of Assyria, and the Jewish people were starving due to the blockade and running out of food to eat. King Sennacherib sent a message which was a fiery verbal attack before any planned physical assault took place, which is recorded in 2 Kings 18 and 19.

(See the full account in 2 Kings 18,19 Names of God,
<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Kings+18%3A13-19%3A37&version=NOG>)

King Hezekiah was one of the few kings of Judah who was upright. King Hezekiah enacted sweeping reforms for the Jews such as mandating the sole worship of Yahweh and prohibition of honoring false gods in the Temple of Jerusalem. The Bible describes Hezekiah as a king who had a close relationship with God, one who did “what was good and right and faithful before the LORD his God” (2 Chronicles 31:20.)

These are the fiery darts that came against King Hezekiah from King Sennacherib of Assyria:

- 1. The devil used specific physical realities to tempt King Hezekiah into fear.**
 - a. It was reality that all other nations attacked by King Sennacherib of Assyria were defeated. So when King S asked, “Did any of the gods of the nations rescue their countries from the king of Assyria?” in verses 33-35, the answer truly was no other nation had their false idols rescue them from King S.
 - b. The other reality is the fact that the Judeans were literally starving to death (verse 27.) They were in a really bad position which fueled the demonic power of how this attack would have been felt.
- 2. The devil questioned God’s trustworthiness.**

- a. The devil will tell you, don't suppose you can trust in God. This starts as a question in verse 19 "Whom then, do you trust". It is stated outright in verse 30 "Don't let Hezekiah get you to trust Yahweh"
- 3. The devil lied.**
 - a. Verse 25 says "Yahweh said to me, 'Attack this country, and destroy it.'" This was a bold faced lie.
- 4. The devil brought fiery accusations against King Hezekiah.**
 - a. See verse 18:22. This attack was insidious for a couple of reasons.
 - b. First, it has misinformation in it "(Yahweh's) the god whos places of worship and altars Hezekiah got rid of." and "But isn't He (The Lord our God) the one who was insulted by Hezekiah?" This is a lie. 2 Chron 31:1 says King Hezekiah cut down poles of false gods, not poles to Yahweh.
 - c. Second, I believe this was especially fiery of an attack because it was the **demonic rage** against this act of national purification and getting right with God.
- 5. The devil disrespected King Hezekiah and his leaders.**
 - a. In chapter 18 verse 20, King S said, "You give useless advce about getting ready for war" and in verse 27, King S' men disrespected King Hezekiah and his officials' wishes to speak only in Aramaic.
- 6. The devil called all people to make peace with him.**
 - a. The devil will beckon you to make peace with him and give yourself up to him. Verse 31 says, "Make peace with me! Come out and give yourselves up to me!"
- 7. The devil promised (the false hope of) independence.**
 - a. The devil will offer you the lie of self-reliance and independence from God, which is a lie because it really is not independence at all. It requires slavery to the devil. This was the lie, "Everyone will eat from his own grapevine and fig tree and drink from his own cistern. I will take you away to ... a country with grain and new wine, a country with bread and vineyards, olive trees, olive oil, and honey." (verses 31-32)
- 8. The devil promised (the false hope of) life.**
 - a. He contradicts what is truly life and truly death. He offered life, but only had death to give. Verse 32 says "...Live! Don't die!..."
- 9. The devil will question God's ability to rescue us.**
 - a. In a question in verse 35, King S asks, "Could Yahweh then rescue Jerusalem from my control?"
- 10. The devil portrayed his agenda, (not who he is), as super relevant.**
 - a. See verse 28
- 11. The devil attacked God's relevance (who He is), making God to seem irrelevant**
 - a. The devil portrays God as irrelevant, denying he is God, denying His power, and placing him in a pantheon of false gods.
- 12. The devil attacked God's identity as God.**
 - a. He did this by implying he is a false god like the pantheon of false gods (verse 33-35)

In all of these things, the devil shifted the focus from God to the fear of danger of the attacking army. The devil elevated the relevance of his own agenda while making God out to be completely irrelevant, making God out to be a dead dumb idol in a sea of false gods. The reality is that God is the one and only true God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit - one in three and three in one, the triune God.

13. We have to acknowledge that sometimes these fiery darts hit us hard, and that is precisely why they are fiery darts.

- a. "When King Hezekiah heard the message, he tore his clothes in grief, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into Yahweh's temple." (19:1)

This is how King Hezekiah responded:

1. **He responded in prayer.** 19:15 "He prayed to Yahweh"
2. **He glorified God for who He is - the almighty, one, true God.** 19:15 "You are enthroned over the angels. You alone are Elohim of all the kingdoms of the world."
3. **He acknowledged the reality of the situation.** 19:17 "It is true, Yahweh, that the kings of Assyria have leveled nations..." King Hezekiah also recognized the lie and said, "...these gods (which were of the leveled nations) aren't real gods..."
4. **He called on God in earnest for rescue.** 19:19 "Now, Yahweh our Elohim, rescue us..."
5. **He appealed to the Glory of God.** 19:19 "... so that all kingdoms on earth will know that you alone are Yahweh Elohim."

This is how God responded:

1. **God provided comfort.** 19:5 says "Don't be afraid of the message"
2. **God made it clear that the Assyrian king's past successes are part of God's plan.** He pointed out that the King of Assyria only destroyed other nations because it was God's plan from the beginning. "... I did this long ago. I planned it in the distant past..." (verse 19:25)
3. **God revealed true demonic motives.** God pointed out that the King of Assyria rages against him which helps us to see the clear demonic undertone. 19:27 "I know ... how you rage against me."
4. **God made it clear that He is already in control of the situation.** (19:7 says that the Assyrian king will be assassinated.)
5. **God promised the Assyrian king will be prevented from attacking.** Verse 19:32 says "He will never come into this city."
6. **God acted according to His timetable.** It was not immediate. Verse 19:35 says He killed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers that night.
7. **God saved His people to honor His name and the name of King David.** Verse 19:34 says "I will shield this city to rescue it for my sake and for the sake of my servant David."
8. **God was seen to be just, unchangeable and sovereign.** He allowed the King of Assyria, King Sennacherib, to be assassinated by his own sons, which is a sad revelation of Sennacherib's own bitter fruit (19:36-37) and proved God's word to be true.

What makes them darts?

A dart is a small pointed missile or projectile which can be aimed at a target. It is a strategic attack. Its aim is to maximize its effectiveness and it is most effective if it causes us to be afraid, to lose our confidence, to shrink back, to waver in our faith, or waver between two opinions.

What makes them fiery?

They are explosive, volatile, and intense. These aren't the attacks we just shrug off, but the ones that hit us and cause us to feel the attack and the heat of the moment. They stir up unbelief, fear, doubt, and highly concentrated / heightened anxiety about a specific circumstance, encounter, word spoken, etc.

A few other Biblical examples of fiery darts

- **Adam and Eve, the first fiery attack.** The attack came in the form of a question as the devil first questioned God's word to man, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"
 - <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+3&version=NIV>
- **The denial of Peter.** Peter said he would not ever deny Jesus, then turns around in a moment when the fiery attack came and denied Jesus three times, just as Jesus predicted.
 - <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+22%3A54-62&version=ESV>
- **Jesus raising the dead girl to life.** Jesus went into a circumstance surrounded by a grieving crowd at the home where Jairus' daughter had already died. Jesus had the amazing faith to speak life into this girl saying to the crowd, "Go away, for the girl is not dead but sleeping." The crowd that was there responded with fiery attack by **mocking and jeering**, because of their unbelief.
 - <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+9%3A18-26&version=AMP>
- **Joseph accused.** Joseph was attacked through the **demonic seduction into sexual sin** by Potiphar's wife. After he refused and fled, he was the one that was accused of seducing Potiphar's wife.
 - <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+39%3A1-20&version=NIV>
- **Jesus in the wilderness.** The devil attacked Jesus in the wilderness after 40 days of fasting. Once again, the devil questioned God's identity and Word.
 - <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+4%3A1-11&version=NIV>

What should we do when (Not if, but when) we are attacked?

Ephesians 6:16 says "In addition to all this, take up the **shield of faith**, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one." We **MUST** stand in faith to overcome the fiery darts of the enemy.

1. **Cover yourself with the full armor of God.** Helmet of salvation, breastplate of righteousness, belt of truth, feet covered with the readiness of the Gospel of peace (<http://goo.gl/B12gyx>), the shield of faith which extinguishes the fiery darts of the enemy, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.
2. **Pray to God for help.** When Nehemiah was being attacked, we come to Nehemiah 6:9 which states: They were all trying to frighten us, thinking, "Their hands will get too weak for the work, and it will not be completed." But I prayed, "**Now strengthen my hands.**" Nehemiah had complete faith in God to do what he asked and continued to stand in the gap.
3. **Take a breather.** Also realize you do not have to immediately respond, even if the world or circumstances would seem to indicate otherwise. Get a word from God FIRST even if that means things happen that are out of your control. God will move even in these "impossible default worst case scenarios."
4. **Remember God is ultimately in control.**
5. **Stand in faith.** Trust God / divert your focus to God, and do not focus on the situation. Remember Matthew 6:33, "Seek first the Kingdom of God"
6. **Speak the truth of God's Word out loud.** This is what Jesus did when He was attacked by the devil in the wilderness.
 - a. <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+4%3A1-11&version=NIV>
7. **Worship God.** Diverting your focus to Him and worshipping into His presence will cause anxiety to melt away.